THE
CATHOLIC RADICAL

"...to foster a society based on creed instead of greed." Peter Maurin

February/March 2025 ***Price: For whatever it's worth.***

Courageous Voices

Editor's Note: On October 17, 2023, the Worcester City Council approved a resolution condemning Hamas' October 7 attack on Israel and taking of hostages. A year later, Worcester's Multi-Faith Coalition for a Gaza Ceasefire tried to introduced a resolution, supported by 1,500 Worcester voters, which called for a Gaza ceasefire, freedom for hostagesn and detainees, an end to blockage of humanitarian aid, and enforcement of US law regarding arms sales. Citing a city rule against raising international issues, the Council refused to allow the resolution to be considered. After athe ACLU determined the Council's refusal to consider the ceasefire resolution violated the petitioners' rights, the Council put the resolution on its January 7, 2025 agenda. More than 50 people spoke in favor of a ceasefire and ten opposed it. Afterwards, Mayor Petty, Councilors Bergman, Russell, Toomey, Colorio, and Mero-Carlson voted to file the resolution, effectively killing it.

While we recognize that justice for Palestinians requires much more than a ceasefire, we are publishing, for the historical record, excerpts of testimony by courageous Worcesterites who stood up for this crucial first step for peace. A full recording of the 1/7/25 Worcester City Council meeting is at: https://play.champds.com/worcesterma/event/2556.

Sarah Lerman-Sinkoff

I'm a Worcester Jewish resident here to urge the Council to pass [the resolution] in support of a ceasefire in Gaza. I also testified here over a year ago when the City Council heard a resolution condemning Hamas while making no mention of Palestinian civilians. I read a statement then of a teenage survivor of the October 7 attacks who said, "If you let hope die, you allow the residents of Gaza to die also." The City Council ignored her words and passed that resolution.

The world we are living in now is the direct outcome of thousands of decisions like these made at every level of society, decisions that say some people's lives,

Claire Schaeffer-Duffy, resolution co-sponsor

some children's lives, are more valuable than others. Sometimes these choices are made out of overt hate, sometimes out of trauma, and sometimes out of political expediency, but the result is still the same: an increasingly bleak and dysfunctional world based on the graves of the innocent....

I want to highlight three delusions which are in your best interest to ignore: First, it is delusional to believe that voting "no" protects Worcester Jews. Funding an army, which uses Jewish symbols to deface other people's neighborhoods, does not benefit me, a Worcester resident who likes to wear a Jewish star necklace at Price Chopper [grocery store]. Second, the entire federal delegation representing Worcester has voiced support for increased pressure on Israel to enact a ceasefire. Meanwhile, the leading local opposition to this resolution

(Continued on Page 2)

Eyewitness

by Bill Ofenloch

In December, I went on a trip to the West Bank of Palestine. It was sponsored by Sabeel, an ecumenical liberation theology organization based in Jerusalem which is committed to nonviolence. They have been arranging two delegations a month to share the experiences of Christians in the Holy Land since the war in Gaza began. Being Advent, we were looking for signs of hope in the difficult situations. Our group of ten primarily traveled around Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and Ramallah. We visited various communities to see how they were surviving under the decades-long occupation by Israel and the increased repression since October 7.

In Bethlehem, we visited the Rev. Munther Isaac at his Lutheran Church with its now famous "Christ in the Rubble" nativity display depicting the infant Jesus lying in the rubble of Gaza to represent where Jesus would be born today. He is an outspoken critic of the bombing and destruction of Gaza and has received numerous threats. He is also very critical of Christian Zionists such as Mike Huckabee, the new US ambassador to Israel, who advocate the takeover of all the Palestinian territory by Israel to fulfill biblical apocalyptic prophesies. Many other Christian leaders are reluctant to be very critical of Israel for fear of repercussions from the occupying forces.

We also visited the Walled Off Hotel, which is located right next to the separation wall in Bethlehem. It is currently not open for guests but has a museum on the occupation and history of the conflict. Much of it has been designed by Banksy, the renowned and reclusive British artist. The wall itself consists of

(Continued on Page 4)

Courageous

(Continued from Page 1)

mounted a deeply delusional primary against [US Rep.] Jim McGovern and failed to get on the ballot. Why would you take his advice? Third, it is delusional to believe that naked discriminatory treatment by this council towards its Muslim constituents will not have downstream political impact. Look at all of these people here. Worcester residents want fairness. This resolution provides it.... Palestinian lives should be considered valuable on their own terms. Every life is a universe, and it's time we started acting like [we believed it].t.

Sheila Abdallah

I work in Worcester as a family physician. I also lived for two years in the Middle East as a volunteer with Christian Peacemaker Teams collaborating with Muslim Peacemaker Teams and Rabbis for Human Rights. On October 7, when Hamas terrorized and killed twelve hundred human beings, we were all horrified.... And now, after 450 days, as bombs we have paid for rain down on Gazan hospitals and homes killing more than 45,000 human beings, we have the chance to say "Enough." When I care for my patients in Worcester, I get upset if they suffer because insurance won't approve medication or the wait in the emergency department is too long, but my colleagues in Gaza are performing surgery without anesthesia, watching children bleed out and die on the floor because there are no bandages, no electricity, no food, while bombs threatening death at any instant explode on the roof through the ICU wall into the operating room....

October 7 was horrific, but multiplying more horror will never be right. Please join your voices with countless other voices of faith and reason, here in Worcester and across the globe... Please join Rabbis for Ceasefire, Pope Francis, the UN, and Doctors Without Borders, calling for a ceasefire and the return of all hostages....

Asmaa Elkabti

I have family in Gaza. [The Israeli attacks] really hit home when so many of my cousins were killed month after month, day after day. This is my cousin, Dr. Semmah [photo displayed]. She got her PhD one year before she was killed in October 2023. Her mom, her dad, her sister and her sister's kids, three generations of a family were killed in an apartment building that Israel had told them was a safe zone.... Over 20 members of the family were killed.... A month later, my cousin's ten-year-old son was at a relative's house sleeping, when Israel bombed the center of the complex. The shrapnel destroyed all the apartment buildings. One of those pieces of shrapnel sliced his neck.... When relatives came to check on everybody, they found him in a pool of blood in his bed....

Patricia Kirkpatrick

Mayor Petty, on October 17, 2023, you and your Council passed a resolution condemning the horrific October 7 Hamas attack on Israel.... Since then, you have not offered a single public word condemning the 15 months of attacks on Palestine by the State of Israel....

It is surreal to stand before you now, pleading for equal treatment...as we witness a genocide. The eight shrouded dolls you see in the front row here represent the at least eight infants who have died from the cold in recent weeks.

To vote against this resolution would be morally indefensible and, quite frankly, pathetic. Eyes across the state are on you, Mayor Petty. Will you join Charlemont, Greenfield, Leverett, Amherst, Northampton, Easthampton, Salem, Malden, Medford, Somerville, Cambridge, and Boston in passing a ceasefire resolution or will you not??

You have a choice. Silence during a US-bankrolled genocide is complicity....

Claire Schaeffer-Duffy

...the city you govern has an impressive precedent speaking up for oppressed people. When the federal government passed the heinous Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, allowing ordinary citizens to kidnap emancipated Blacks and send them back into slavery, Worcesterites spoke out. They did not say, this is a federal matter, out of our purview. In riotous manner, they sent the federal slave catcher packing and made it clear that in Worcester, at least, the lives of Blacks mattered.

When the US Senate voted on the anti-immigrant Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, our own US Senator George Hoar, a Republican by the way, did not look around him to check which way the political winds were blowing. He voted conscience and opposed a law that treated Chinese immigrants as sub-human. The sole senator to do so. Did he get tarred and feathered? NO. Thousands of Worcester residents contributed to his publicly funded statue that sits outside City Hall to this day.

The Multi-faith Coalition has not come to sow division in this council or in the city. ...[A year ago,] you passed a one-sided resolution on this war and tonight is your opportunity to correct that.... No community, whether Palestinian, Lebanese, or Israeli, no community should be subjected to what the Gazans are enduring.

(Continued to Page 4)

Vol. 41, No. 4 **THE** **February/March 2025**

CATHOLIC **RADICAL**

Published on 100% eucalyptus paper every two months by:

The Saints Francis & Thérèse Catholic Worker Community

52 Mason Street, Worcester, MA 01610

Telephone: (508) 753-3588, 753-3089 Email:theresecw2@gmail.com

Founded in 1933 by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin, the Catholic Worker is a lay movement serving the poor while denouncing injustice and proclaiming peace. We are not tax exempt. We rely entirely on the generosity of our supporters to meet our expenses. We welcome volunteers, letters, poetry, articles, artwork, and donations.

Fathoming Evil

by Scott Schaeffer-Duffy

In the early hours of the new year in New Orleans, 42-year-old Shamsud-Din Jabbar deliberately killed 15 people and injured dozens more with a pickup truck loaded with weapons, explosive devices, and an Islamic State flag. He wounded two police officers before he was shot and killed.

New Orleans Police Department Superintendent Anne Kirkpatrick said, "He was hellbent on creating the carnage and the damage that he did."

President-elect Trump said Jabbar's action of "pure evil" illustrated that "criminals coming in [to the US] are far worse than the criminals we have in our country."

The FBI is investigating the event as a terrorist attack, although no organization has, thus far, claimed responsibility for the attack.

Contrary to Trump's assumption, Jabbar was not an immigrant. He was a US-born citizen, a graduate of Georgia State University, a US Army veteran of two tours in Afghanistan, who had been promoted to sergeant, a father of three, and a convert from Christianity to Islam.

Abdur Jabbar told the press that his brother was "a nice guy, a friend, really smart, caring.... I would have never imagined him doing something like this."

But what kind of "nice guy" drives a truck into and over dozens of men and women?

The attack brings to mind the massive 1995 bombing of the Federal Building in Oklahoma City by Timothy McVeigh which killed 168 people, including 19 children, and wounded several hundred more. Like Jabbar, McVeigh was an army veteran with a spotless record who fought in the Middle East.

Both men achieved honors in the military. Jabbar was promoted while fighting in Afghanistan. McVeigh earned a Bronze Star for heroism during the Gulf War. How did they come to believe that killing defenseless American civilians was acceptable?

While the road from innocence to brutality varies, in these instances, both men witnessed unrestrained US military strikes on civilians. In the Gulf War, the US killed over 300,000 Iraqis, almost half of them civilians. In Afghanistan, the US killed 176,000 people, 46,319 of them civilians.

In one instance in 1991, which McVeigh must have been aware of since he was deployed in Iraq at that time, the US deliberately targeted the Amiriyah civilian air raid shelter in Baghdad with two precision bombs, incinerating 300 people, mostly women and children. In the bloody aftermath, the US claimed without verification that the civilians were used as human shields for a military command and control center.

The notion that massacring civilians is relegated only to the US government is a hard sell for those who witnessed or participated in it as soldiers. After his discharge, McVeigh was further incensed by federal agents killing 300 people, including 28 children, in Waco, Texas.

Although it is more comfortable to conclude that people like Jabbar and McVeigh were either brain-washed by Islamist or right-wing militias, or mentally ill, the contention that our violence-drenched government policies had a role in their actions is hard to ignore.

What is more alarming is that Israel's killing of over 60,000 people, most of them civilians, in Gaza, the West Bank, Lebanon, Syria, and Yemen, was perpetrated with US arms paid for by the American people.

In response to Jabbar's killing, President Biden said, "There is no justification for violence of any kind...." But it is no secret that Biden approved $22.6 billion in additional military funds to Israel, money which enabled Israel to kill tens of thousands of people and to demolish water purification plants, homes, schools, mosques, hospitals, and shelters. He vetoed every United Nations Security Council resolution for a ceasefire. How credible is his shock at the handful of deaths in New Orleans while he simultaneously facilitated the murder of more people daily by Israel? And more disturbing for all of us far from the Middle East: How long will it be before those chickens come home to roost?

People who have lost entire families, have seen children hungry, thirsty, dismembered, frozen, or killed with US support may ultimately decide to bring carnage to our shores. Just as Israeli civilians, enjoying an outdoor concert and party, were brutalized by escapees from the nightmare called Gaza, Americans cannot assume that we will be indefinitely safe at outdoor events with our families.

As Pope Paul VI said so well, "If you want peace, work for justice." Our best defense against terrorism is to stop unleashing terror on others. Ω

Courageous

(Continued from Page 2)

Tonight..., we ask you to drop all political calculations and vote conscience. Take this historic opportunity to back a resolution that 100 US cities and towns have already passed. Do it for Palestinians in Gaza, Israelis, and people of Worcester,. so that, when future generations look back at this dark time of a US-facilitated genocide against the Palestinians, they will see that Worcester cried out for ceasefire.

Councilor Thu Nguyen

...I believe in the dignity and humanity of Palestinians. They are deserving of life. I stand with our residents calling for an end to the genocide and a permanent and immediate ceasefire. Out tax dollars are funding this genocide. US-made bombs are contributing to the killing of Palestinians. We have blood on our hands. It is our duty to call for an end to genocide.

Councilor Etel Haxhiaj

...It is disheartening that many elected officials...have opted for silence to inoculate themselves from political repercussions. When is the appropriate time to speak out? Is it only after every Palestinian has been buried and every tent set ablaze? When there are no children left to bomb and no limbs left to carry their lifeless bodies? When more Palestinian mothers cradle their infants frozen to death or collect whatever body parts they can find? If we are not okay with the loss of life and do not support this war, as some have publicly assured us, let our votes reflect that truth. This resolution asks us to support the release of Israeli hostages and Palestinian political prisoners, an end to the ethnic cleansing of Palestinian civilians, and a lasting peace. Which of these does your "NO" vote say "NO" to?... Ω

"The hottest places in Hell are reserved for those who, in a period of moral crisis, maintain their neutrality."

Dante Alighieri

Eyewitness

(Continued from Page 1)

blocks of concrete twenty feet high to isolate Israeli settlements and highways from Palestinian areas. Jewish settlements are all over the West Bank, generally on hilltops. Many of the settlements are trying to seize, by violent intimidation or other means, more Palestinian land in order to link up with one another.

art by Banksy

There are two sets of highways in many areas, better modern ones restricted to Israelis who have yellow license plates and old, poorly maintained roads for Palestinians with their green plates. They are separated by high fences or the concrete wall. To pass in or out of different jurisdictions vehicles must pass through checkpoints. These allow Israel to control travel back and forth. Many Palestinians who used to work in Israel are prevented from doing so now, creating a 40% unemployment rate. This increases the incentive to emigrate.

El-Makhrour is a fertile valley and one of the last green spaces for Palestinians near Bethlehem. The Palestinians are now under pressure from Israel to incorporate the valley into surrounding settlements. We met with Alice Kisiya, whose family is fighting in the courts to keep their land in the valley. She was arrested after settlers attacked he,r and has had her house bombed and demolished several times. Yet she is optimistic that they will retain their hereditary land where they have lived for hundreds of years. We also visited the Tent of Nations where Daoud Nasser and his family maintain a farm on a hilltop surrounded by settlements. They are able to survive because of much international support and many visitors.

In the Armenian Quarter of the old city of Jerusalem, we visited activists who have maintained a year-long occupation of a portion of the "Cow's Garden." This is the largest remaining open area in the Old City. It has been leased for the last 100 years by the Armenian Patriarchate for a term of 100 years to a shell company on the pretext of building a hotel. The activists believe it is a ploy by the Israelis to acquire more Palestinian land. Protestors blocked bulldozers which started tearing up the pavement of a parking lot. They set up barricades with the rubble and built a temporary shelter to house the occupiers. Activists are in an extended court battle arguing that the land was in trust and could not be sold, and zoning would prevent any hotel from being built.

One of the highlights of the trip was meeting with Layan Nase,r who had just been released the week before from 8 months of administrative detention. She had been previously arrested in 2023 for being a student activist at Birzeit University. She was out on bail from that arrest when soldiers came to her family's home in the middle of the night to take her into detention with no definite charges and for an indefinite time. Layan recounted the harsh conditions she was held under in an Israeli prison with crowding, poor food, and little recreation. She is a member of the Anglican Church in Birzeit and was probably released because of worldwide pressure from the Anglican community, including the Archbishop of Canterbury. 13,000 Palestinians are being held in Israeli prisons with 3-4,000 in administrative detention without charges.

Unfortunately most of the Christians are leaving Palestine because of the unrelenting pressure of the occupation. Where they once numbered 20% of the population, they are now down to under 2%. Nevertheless, many continue to struggle to survive and maintain their communities and can use our support and solidarity. What will be the Holy Land with no Christians?

If you are interested in joining a delegation with Sabeel or getting more information, contact Friends of Sabeel at www.fosna.org/delegations. Ω

the blink of an eye

by Jim Consedine

Editor's Note: This poem is taken from Jim Consedine's new book **Bursting With Gratitude**. *Jim is a Catholic Worker from New Zealand, a Catholic priest, who, in 1982, met Scott and Claire Schaeffer-Duffy at Saint Benedict's Catholic Worker in Washington , DC.*

a hundred years from now
who will know us
except the One who creates
sustains, dances, cries, plays with
and enjoys our daily presence

Our lives are nothing more
than the blink of an eye
the sage remind us
a grain in the sand
here now, gone tomorrow

love while the sun shines
time is short, runs swiftly
like sand through a sieve
expand this unique gift
that lasts forever

the deeper our love
the more blessed our lives Ω

April Fools Day Protest

After holding serious protests, in 2023 and 2024, against nuclear weapons construction by General Dynamics Corporation, members of the Atlantic Life Community decided it was time for a humorous approach. So, early on Tuesday, April 1, 2025, we will gather on Pequot Avenue in New London, Connecticut to hold a banner reading, "Kooks for Nukes" and signs saying: "General Dynamics Radiates Hope," "Screw Tax Payers," and "Peace Is for Sissies." Our leaflet will say that General Dynamics, the fifth largest nuclear weapons manufacturer in the world, "promises a brighter and more explosive future." We will urge President Trump to outdo even President Biden's flood of funds for new nuclear arms by resuming above-ground nuclear tests to "Make America Quake Again."

After 15 minutes of this charade, we will shout "April Fools!" and then, flip the signs and banners to reveal anti-nuclear messages. At this point, those who choose to risk arrest will carry a banner across the street to block the entrance to General Dynamics.

For more information about how you can participate, please, contact Scott Schaeffer-Duffy at theresecw2@gmail or 508 753-3588. Ω

Letters

Editor's Note: We received the following letter along with a report from human rights monitors saying that, on December 6, 2023, Israeli aircraft and helicopters fired multiple missiles into Gaza's Mawasi Khan Yunis camp of displaced Palestinians, despite the fact that they were told it was a safe zone. The fragile tents caught fire, killing twenty-two people, including women and children, who were burned alive.

Claire & Scott,

How can anyone on either side of a conflict carry out this sort of extreme tortured butchery and carnage upon other humans, especially babies and other children? It, obviously, involves a form of atrociously monstrous mental illness, along with an all-consuming desire for control and power over others in addition to a thieving kind of huge greed and a seething level of hatred. How else can such intense and utter misery be inflicted upon victims of genocide?

I remember Scott telling me around thirty years ago that evil is like magma bubbling and oozing up to the surface. Under great pressure to be, it comes up easily in a new place and, once one tamps it down, in another. So there is no sense to get discouraged if it's not entirely eradicated by one's efforts. After all, what else is one going to do with his or her life and time other than to improve the quality and betterment in life as best as one can? So one carries on as best as can be devised under the circumstances.

And I'll add that periodically recalling the Serenity Prayer also helps keep one on task despite the degree that the evil IS so very evil. It, obviously, is so when even little babies are so deeply despised that

they are buried alive in bombed housing rubble or burned to death.

Emily Spence
North Grafton, Massachusetts

Dear Claire,
I was glad to read "Unexpected Visitation" and the difficult feelings you admitted to—from anger to feeling manipulated etc. Having lived and worked at Maryhouse Catholic Worker in New York City, I could totally relate.

I recall the day a lady came in (as well as others) for lunch, helping herself to the huge pot of soup in the kitchen, she drained off all the liquid, keeping lots of veggies and whatever meat (if any) we had. I was so furious at her selfishness and lack of consideration for others. In reality, there was probably enough but I over-reacted, telling her to put half back—which she refused to do. I told her to leave and she refused to do that either. Things went south from there, and an uncomfortable silence descended on the dining room as residents and guests ate and left.

After threatening to call the police to evict her (shame on me!), I left her alone and, after a while, she left on her own.

In my experience, the types of dilemmas you (and I) faced are too often glossed over in the writing—in favor of some pious and/or rather sappy solutions. So **bravo** to you for being real! Me—I'm still embarrassed by how poorly I handled myself.

name withheld
New Jersey

Editor's Note: Don't be too hard on yourself. Years ago, at Saint Benedict's Catholic Worker in Washington, DC Scott Schaeffer-Duffy got in an argument with a guest named Marcel about how he and others disrespected the house's few rules. After Scott delivered a disparaging generalization about the guests, Marcel insulted Scott and Claire, prompting Scott to demand an apology. Marcel refused to do so unless Scott apologized first, something he refused to do. The argument heated up until Scott asked Marcel to leave which he also refused to do, prompting Scott to call the police. When an officer arrived, he listened to Scott and Marcel and concluded, "I think you both should apologize to each other," something a humiliated Scott had to do.

None of us is perfect. Ultimately, we all depend more on God's mercy than our achievements.

Hi Scott,
I especially appreciated your article on social sin. "Denouncing social sin always takes a back seat when money is at stake." It rings true and is a good reminder to call this out when it happens (so frequently and sometimes so locally). It seems as though social sin and calling it to light is a good reflection, especially in this time of Capitalistmas.

I think of your community often and hope you all are staying safe and well!

Mary O'Connell
Kansas City, Missouri

Dear Scott & Claire,
I look forward to your newsletters, and grab for them eagerly off the pile of mail. Your pieces are inspiring. For instance, Claire, I especially appreciated your vulnerability and frustrations so authentically described in "Unexpected Visitation." I was "there" with you.

My husband and I have a homestead farm in the Berkshires in what's called "The Hilltowns." Spending a considerable amount of time in nature, participating in the natural world, is essential to my grounding in this fraught, technologically speed up and hyper time. I lead music in the West Cummington Church—something I've been doing for 35 years now. Being part of a small community of many different people who come together every Sunday to worship and sing, but wouldn't otherwise be in the same tribe, who have grown to love and respect each other's differences, is another grounding.

Music. Community. Nature.
All so dear to me.
God bless you both.

Penny Schultz
Hadenville, Massachusetts

Dear Scott & Claire,
What a team! The December/January *Catholic Radical* arrived in another downturn of mood in recovery from the latest election disaster**.** So hungry for grace did I feel, I read it cover to cover, and grace came like the snow out my window, purifying the land. Thank you both!

Scott, your piece on social sin reads like an oracle of Jeremiah.

My partner, Patience, and I are bowled over with grief about the state of the US, the state of Palestine and now Lebanon, the state of Ukraine, South Sudan, Congo, Haiti ... the list goes on, and the political winds are hardly blowing in the right direction. The future seems deadly and ominous and conjures apocalyptic scenes like Joel 2 and Revelation. And then, we pause, realizing, oh yeah, "apocalypse"= revelation. With the incomprehensible hypocrisy—Catholic and Protestant—we are entering a new revealing, a new time when the imperial church will transform or die.

Climate change denial and willful ignorance of militaristic answers to human conflict equate to un-equivocal mortal sin.

Claire, the single candle in the middle of "Unexpected Visitation" is like the lovely hope candle we've lit on the first Sunday of Advent. There's hope there in the flame, and more flame will be lit this Sunday with a candle of peace.

Keep hope. God's peace. Christ's grace.

Michael Caldwell
North Wolcott, Vermont

Dear Claire & Scott, family, Catholic Worker Community, and guests,
Advent always passes quickly, but this year seems faster and shorter than other years. Thank you very much for *The Catholic Radical*. I thought the article on social sin is so necessary to share again and again. "Social Sin" will unlikely get the attention of the Catholic hierarchy in the way it is needed. Just keep people focused on the 6th and 9th commandments [against killing and lying]. Sadly, the bishops miss the reality that human sexuality is the precious gift of a loving God.

I send along my prayers that your ministry continues to do the work of human dignity and respect for all people in a time that seeks to alienate and attack too many groups of men and women in the name of God and religion.

Father Thirb Millott
Osterville, Massachusetts

Dear Claire & Scott,
The current issue of *The Catholic Radical* is a fine one. Thanks so much. One of the things you do in each issue is to present the **BIG** picture, as on page 1, but it's complementary in the **little** picture—as in the story of CM and Claire, as the picture of your 7 or 8 gathered around the dining table. Both matter.

Raúl & Barbara Laborde
Oakham, Massachusetts

Dear Scott and Claire,
I appreciate your newsletter and the stories that it comprises. For me, to read is to ration, since I also take in *The Open Door, The Nuclear Resister*, and more. Your reading schedule must be very extensive. I was taken by Claire's story of the importunate homeless woman, though, like the well-to-do people, this woman can get others to work for her—and at their (Claire's) expense. Claire's self-portrayal hints at demotion to a lower status. Good artistry here, skillfully delivered. Being a war correspondent (in the right place at the right time) certainly helps—as does being a mom. Running a shelter is not far down the list. You have found a durable "métier," as long practice aims toward perfection.

Paul Frazier
Arkport, New York

Dear Scott and Claire,
Always, your newsletter brings goodness and wisdom into our lives. The December/January reflections were especially helpful. Thanks for delineating social sin, and, Claire, your "Unexpected Visitation" will stay with me for a long time.

Wishing you strength, peace, and abiding love.

Kathy Kelly
Saint Charles, Illinois

Hi there, Scottie and Claire,
Been traveling the mid-western region—a bit west of Tennessee these days— and came across a copy of that book [on Dorothy Day's life] your reviewed in your latest paper. I'm not as certain as you are, Scottie, that there's re-deeming value between those covers. A little light for my appetite.

Your newsletter — you guys are doing it up right —lots of meat on those bones. Back in the day, I'd measure the worth of a movement rag if it was a paper I'd read, set down, and pick up again. That's your paper — little gems spread around the pages, things to re-member.

Keep on keepin' on, you two, and Merry Merry Xmas

Lou Dyte
On the road

Enjoyed your review of the new graphic novel Dorothy Day biography.

Did Peter Maurin ever write anything other than easy essays, articles or such? I can't find anything. Maybe he just preferred the easy essays to get his message out.

If you like graphic novels, get Orwell's **1984**. It's only $20 on Amazon and I think it's great. **1984** is a favorite book or mine. I've got all four film versions in my DVD collection. The first two were performed live in 1953, one in England and one here in America. The best version is the one filmed in England in 1984 with John Huston as Winston Smith and Richard Burton, in his last film, as O'Brien, his tormentor.

Richard Douglass
Northampton, Massachusetts

Editor's Note: Sorry to say, Peter Maurin did not publish anything except Easy Essays which can be found online at the Catholic Worker website or in print in ***The Forgotten Radical: Peter Maurin*** *by Fordham University Press.*

Yes! I am a Radical

Down to the Roots

by Peter Maurin

I was once thrown out
of a Knights of Columbus meeting
because, as the K. of C. Official said,
I was radical.
I was introduced as a radical
before the college students
of a Franciscan college,
And the Franciscan Father added
"I am as radical
as Peter Maurin."
Speaking in a girls' college
near St. Cloud, Minnesota,
I was told by Bishop Busch,
"Conservatives
are up in a tree
and you are trying
to go down to the roots." Ω

Peg Averill

WHAT WE CAN'T DO ALONE,
WE CAN DO TOGETHER

Catholic Worker Calendar

February 5 & 19, March 5 & 19 - Evening Prayer: Please join us for short silent meditation followed by Evening Prayer with Taizé chant at 52 Mason Street. 7:00 PM. Refreshments to follow.

Mason Street Musings

Claire and I like to usher in the New Year with a five-mile road race in Sterling, Massachusetts called the "Freezer Five." Ironically, due to climate change, none of the most recent races have been below freezing. This was not the case on December 27 in Twin Mountain, New Hampshire where I ran at nine below zero and came back with a frosted beard. A week later, arctic temperatures coupled with high wind made Worcester feel almost as cold as the White Mountains.

On one particularly frigid morning, I broke up a five-mile, before sunrise run with stops in various locations. While warming up in McDonald's, I noticed three people with their heads down on their tables sound asleep in winter clothes. The men must have spent an excruciating night outside before coming in out of the cold to recover and rest. I was grateful that the McDonald's employees didn't eject them. Since I had three dollar bills in my pocket, I left one on the tables of each of the men before heading out to run again. My gesture was pitiful, in an age when you can't even buy a hot drink for a buck, but it was all I had.

Most of the time, our hospitality represents not much more than a band-aid for people whose lives are chock-full of suffering. The fact that some of that suffering derives from bad choices doesn't diminish its reality.

But sometimes, folks who stay with us for weeks, months, or years, go on to better lives. Some even contact us long afterwards to express gratitude and share their triumphs. To tell you the truth, I'm always surprised to learn who swam safely to shore and who did not. A neighbor I wrote off as a lost cause is now not only happily married, but also a wealthy contractor building new housing all over Worcester, including across the street from us and next door.

I'm happy to say, that one of our guests recently found work and then housing. Another is coming closer to securing permanent housing. But a repeat guest from years ago has physical and mental challenges holding her back and two other guests are undocumented, making them targets of the new administration and its cronies. The hurdles some people face dwarf my travails as a year-round runner. For me, icicles on my beard are a novelty or badge of machismo, but, for others, such things are warning bells of impending death.

That is the rub. How do we step out of our comfortable reality to gain empathy for the unhoused and undocumented, not to mention those shivering in flimsy tents besieged by Israeli shells in Gaza? Scripture talks about taking away our hearts of stone and replacing them "**with hearts of flesh**." The prophet Ezekiel goes on to highlight God's promise: "**I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes.**"

I suppose that's what we can hope and pray for: guidance and grace.

Thank you all for helping us continue our journey to be closer to the people God created us and calls us to be. Ω

Scott

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

SS. Francis & Thérèse Catholic Worker
52 Mason Street
Worcester, MA, USA 01610
(508) 753-3588 & (508) 753-3089

FIRST CLASS
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
WORCESTER, MA
PERMIT NO. 271

Doctors Against Genocide 1/16/25 Statement on the Ceasefire in Gaza

Doctors Against Genocide welcomes the news of a ceasefire in Gaza, as it provides relief for those who have endured unimaginable suffering. The genocide on the Palestinian people in Gaza has shattered all bounds of human decency, setting record levels of brutality: the most children killed and maimed, the most healthcare workers and journalists targeted, and the most hospitals destroyed in modern history. These are not just grim,statistics—they are irrefutable proof of genocide. They demand urgent, unwavering global action to hold perpetrators accountable and prevent such atrocities from recurring.

This ceasefire must not overshadow the systemic conditions—occupation, apartheid, dehumanization, and the ongoing denial of basic human rights—that led to this genocide. A ceasefire cannot replace the urgent need for justice, accountability, and a complete dismantling of the frameworks that enabled the genocide.

Doctors Against Genocide reaffirms our positions and demand the following:

1. **Immediate and Unconditional Release of Healthcare Workers**
Free all detained healthcare workers, including Dr. Hussam Abu Safiya, and ensure their protection as mandated by international law.

2. **Unrestricted Humanitarian Access**
Allow immediate, unrestricted access for medical aid, humanitarian relief, and international observers in Gaza.

3. **Immediate Deployment of Fact-Finding Teams**
Immediate deployment of independent teams to document war crimes and destruction, alongside international media to ensure accurate reporting.

4. **Immediate Deployment of Recovery Support Teams**
Ensure unrestricted access for specialized teams trained in genocide survivor support and recovery.

5. **Reparations and Reconstruction of Gaza**
Hold Israel and the United States accountable for rebuilding Gaza and providing reparations for the destruction of civilian infrastructure.

6. **End the Occupation and Apartheid System**
Dismantle the occupation and apartheid system that enable ongoing genocide and systemic violence against Palestinians in historic Palestine.

7. **Support for ICC(International Criminal Court) and ICJ (International Court of Justice) Prosecutions**
Provide full international support for the ICC and ICJ in prosecuting war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide.

8. **Dismantlement of Illegal Settlements**
Enforce the ICJ ruling to dismantle all illegal Israeli settlements, which perpetuate apartheid, ethnic cleansing, and systemic violence.

9. **Suspension of Israel's UN Membership**
Suspend Israel's UN membership until it complies with international law and ceases violations of human rights and humanitarian law.

10. **Decolonization of Medicine**
Remove oppressive systems in global healthcare and hold institutions accountable for complicity in genocide.

Doctors Against Genocide will remain steadfast in fighting genocide anywhere in the world and standing in solidarity with all oppressed peoples. More information at: https://doctorsagainstgenocide.org/